IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly rewrite Claims 1-34 as follows and add new claims 35-39, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121:

1. (currently amended) An isolated strain of *Methylophilus methylotrophus* having L- lysine-producing ability, wherein dihydrodipicolinate synthase activity is enhanced as compared to a wild-type *Methylophilus methylotrophus* strain, and wherein said dihydrodipicolinate synthase is selected from the group consisting of:

a) a protein encoded by a DNA comprising nucleotides 1268 to 2155 of SEQ ID NO:9; and

b) a protein having dihydrodipicolinate synthase activity and encoded by a DNA comprising nucleotide numbers 1268 to 2155 of SEQ ID NO:9, except that substitution, deletion, or addition of one to 10 amino acids is present in the amino acid sequence of said protein,

and wherein said activity is enhanced by a method selected from the group consisting of:

i) increasing the copy number of said DNA in said strain,

ii) placing multiple copies of said DNA on the chromosome of said strain, and

iii) replacing a native promoter with a stronger promoter upstream of said DNA.

2. (previously presented) The isolated strain according to claim 7, wherein the L-amino acid is L-lysine.

3. (cancelled)

4. (cancelled)

5. (currently amended) An isolated strain of *Methylophilus methylotrophus* having L-lysine-producing ability, wherein dihydrodipicolinate synthase activity and aspartokinase activity are enhanced as compared to a wild-type *Methylophilus methylotrophus* strain, and wherein said dihydrodipicolinate synthase is selected from the group consisting of:

a) a protein encoded by a DNA comprising nucleotides 1268 to 2155 of SEQ ID NO:9; and

b) a protein having dihydrodipicolinate synthase activity and encoded by a DNA

comprising nucleotides 1268 to 2155 of SEQ ID NO:9, except that substitution, deletion, or addition of one to 10 amino acids is present in the amino acid sequence of said protein,

and wherein said aspartokinase is selected from the group consisting of:

a) a protein encoded by a DNA comprising nucleotides 510 to 1736 of SEQ ID NO:5; and

b) a protein having aspartokinase activity and encoded by a DNA comprising nucleotides 510 to 1736 of SEQ ID NO:5 , except that substitution, deletion, addition, or inversion of one to 10 amino acids is present in the amino acid sequence of said protein,

and wherein said activity is enhanced by a method selected from the group consisting of:

i) increasing the copy number of said DNA in said strain,

ii) placing multiple copies of said DNA on the chromosome of said strain, and

iii) replacing a native promoter with a stronger promoter upstream of said DNA.

6. (cancelled)

7. (currently amended) An isolated strain of *Methylophilus methylotrophus* having L-amino acid-producing ability, wherein aspartokinase activity is enhanced as compared to wild-type *Methylophilus methylotrophus* strain, and wherein said aspartokinase is selected from the group consisting of:

a) a protein encoded by a DNA comprising nucleotides 510 to 1736 of SEQ ID NO:5; and

b) a protein having aspartokinase activity and encoded by a DNA comprising nucleotides 510 to 1736 of SEQ ID NO:5 , except that substitution, deletion, or addition of one to 10 amino acids is present in the amino acid sequence of said protein

and wherein said activity is enhanced by a method selected from the group consisting of:

i) increasing the copy number of said DNA in said strain,

ii) placing multiple copies of said DNA on the chromosome of said strain, and

iii) replacing a native promoter with a stronger promoter upstream of said DNA.

8. (currently amended) The isolated strain according to claim 5, wherein an activity or activities of one, two, or three ~~of~~ enzymes selected from the group consisting of aspartic acid semialdehyde dehydrogenase, dihydrodipicolinate reductase, and diaminopimelate decarboxylase is/are enhanced as compared to a wild-type *Methylophilus methylotrophus* strain by a method selected from the group consisting of:

i) increasing the copy number(s) of a DNA(s) encoding said one, two, or three enzyme(s) in said strain,

ii) placing multiple copies of said DNA(s) on the chromosome of said strain, and

iii) replacing a native promoter with a stronger promoter upstream of said DNA(s).

9. (previously presented) The isolated strain according to claim 5, wherein the dihydrodipicolinate synthase activity and the aspartokinase activity are enhanced as compared to a wild-type *Methylophilus methylotrophus* strain by transformation with a DNA coding for said dihydrodipicolinate synthase and a DNA coding for said aspartokinase.

10. (currently amended) The isolated strain according to claim 7, wherein activities of homoserine dehydrogenase, homoserine kinase and threonine synthase are enhanced as compared to wild-type *Methylophilus methylotrophus* strain by a method selected from the group consisting of:

i) increasing the copy numbers of DNAs encoding homoserine dehydrogenase, homoserine kinase, and threonine synthase in said strain,

ii) placing multiple copies of said DNAs on the chromosome of said strain, and

iii) replacing a native promoter with a stronger promoter upstream of said DNAs, and wherein said isolated strain has L-threonine-producing ability.

11. (cancelled)

12. (previously presented) A method for producing L-lysine, which comprises culturing said strain as defined in claim 1 in a medium, accumulating said L-lysine in said

medium, and collecting the L-lysine from said medium.

13. (original) The method according to claim 12, wherein the medium contains methanol as a main carbon source.

14-15. (canceled).

16. (previously presented) An isolated DNA which codes for a protein selected from the group consisting of:

(A) a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 6, and

(B) a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:6 except that substitution, deletion, insertion, or addition of one to 10 amino acids in said amino acid sequence is present, and wherein said protein has aspartokinase activity.

17. (currently amended) The DNA according to claim 16, wherein said DNA is selected from the group consisting of:

(a) a DNA comprising the nucleotides 510 to 1736 of SEQ ID NO:5; and

(b) a DNA having the nucleotides 510 to 1736 of SEQ ID NO:5, except that substitution, deletion, or addition of one to 10 amino acids is present in the amino acid sequence of a protein ~~enoded~~ encoded by said DNA, and wherein said DNA codes for a protein having aspartokinase activity.

18-19. (canceled).

20. (previously presented) An isolated DNA which codes for a protein selected from the group consisting of:

(E) a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:10, and

(F) a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:10 except that substitution, deletion, insertion, or addition of one to 10 amino acids in said amino acid sequence is present, and wherein said protein has dihydrodipicolinate synthase activity.

21. (previously presented) The DNA according to claim 20, wherein said DNA is selected from the group consisting of:

(e) a DNA comprising the nucleotides 1268 to 2155 of SEQ ID NO:9; and

(f) a DNA having the nucleotides 1268 to 2155 of SEQ ID NO:9 except that substitution, deletion, or addition of one to 10 amino acids is present in the amino acid sequence of a protein encoded by said DNA, and wherein said DNA codes for a protein having dihydrodipicolinate synthase activity.

22-25. (canceled).

26. (currently amended) The isolated strain according to claim 1, wherein an activity or activities of one, two, or three of enzymes selected from the group consisting of aspartic acid semialdehyde dehydrogenase, dihydrodipicolinate reductase and diaminopimelate decarboxylase is/are enhanced as compared to a wild-type *Methylophilus methylotrophus* strain by a method selected from the group consisting of:

i) increasing the copy number(s) of a DNA(s) encoding said one, two, or three enzyme(s) in said strain,

ii) placing multiple copies of said DNA(s) on the chromosome of said strain, and

iii) replacing a native promoter with a stronger promoter upstream of said DNA(s).

27. (currently amended) The isolated strain according to claim 2, wherein an activity or activities of one, two, or three of enzymes selected from the group consisting of aspartic acid semialdehyde dehydrogenase, dihydrodipicolinate reductase and diaminopimelate decarboxylase is/are enhanced as compared to a wild-type *Methylophilus methylotrophus* strain by a method selected from the group consisting of:

i) increasing the copy number(s) of a DNA(s) encoding said one, two, or three enzyme(s) in said strain,

ii) placing multiple copies of said DNA(s) on the chromosome of said strain, and

iii) replacing a native promoter with a stronger promoter upstream of said

DNA(s).

28. (previously presented) A method for producing L-lysine, which comprises culturing said strain as defined in claim 5 in a medium, accumulating said L-lysine in said medium, and collecting the L-lysine from said medium.

29. (previously presented) The method according to claim 28, wherein the medium contains methanol as a main carbon source.

30. (previously presented) A method for producing an L-amino acid, which comprises culturing said strain as defined in claim 7 in a medium, accumulating said L-amino acid in said medium, and collecting the L-amino acid from said medium.

31. (previously presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein the medium contains methanol as a main carbon source.

32-34. (canceled).

35. (new) A method for producing L-lysine, which comprises culturing said strain as defined in claim 8 in a medium, accumulating L-lysine in said medium, and collecting L-lysine from said medium.

36. (new) A method for producing L-lysine, which comprises culturing said strain as defined in claim 9 in a medium, accumulating L-lysine in said medium, and collecting L-lysine from said medium.

37. (new) A method for producing L-lysine, which comprises culturing said strain as defined in claim 26 in a medium, accumulating L-lysine in said medium, and collecting L-lysine from said medium.

38. (new) A method for producing L-lysine, which comprises culturing said strain

as defined in claim 27 in a medium, accumulating L-lysine in said medium, and collecting L-lysine from said medium.

39. (new) A method for producing L-threonine, which comprises culturing said strain as defined in claim 10 in a medium, accumulating L-threonine in said medium, and collecting L-threonine from said medium.